

**CITY OF INDEPENDENCE
SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 3, 2020 AT 3:30 P.M.
VIA ZOOM**

Present: Chairperson Tom Narduzzi
 Councilperson Kathleen Kapusta
 Councilperson Chris Walchanowicz

Others Present: Vice Mayor Dave Grendel
 Councilperson Kenn Synek (arrived 3:44 p.m.)
 Councilperson Jim Trakas
 Councilperson Dale Veverka
 Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz
 Finance Director Vern Blaze
 Police Chief Michael Kilbane
 Fire Chief Steve Rega

Chairman Narduzzi called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m.

Chairman Narduzzi said I hope everyone voted already because it took me about an hour and a half.

Vice Mayor Grendel said I voted absentee.

Chairman Narduzzi said I didn't know we had so many registered voters in Independence.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said they didn't turn out last year.

Chairman Narduzzi said they sure didn't. So, I guess we will jump right in here Chief. With regard to that holdup or carjacking on Rockside Road, what are we doing to assure the residents that we are doing something to try to make it not happen again. I guess just some kind of discussion on what we are doing, what our staffing is on Rockside Road. There are all kind of things flying around this town. I just want to get everything out in the open and hide nothing. The floor is yours.

Chief Kilbane said unfortunately crime and violent crime in particular is at unprecedented levels, not just regionally but nationwide. I was in a conference earlier today, Cleveland's homicide rate so far; last year they had 106 I think or 109 all year. They are at 146 already this year, and there's two full months left in the year. You know that trend is the same with most crimes, and none of us are spared.

What we have done is we have been as reactive as possible and proactive to a point too; and number one information sharing, trying to find out how these folks work and how they are doing the crime to try and head them off at the pass. The good news is in our residential areas it has been extremely successful. We were able to narrow down when those car burglaries were occurring and the attempted car thefts were occurring; and we were able to set up focus details using marked cars, unmarked cars, overlapping patrols. We would trade mutual aid back and forth with the surrounding cities to saturate areas. Over the past probably two weeks we have gotten in three pursuits with suspicious vehicles that we believe were getting ready to do that, and soon as our guys went to stop them, they took off. Since then we have not had much activity of that nature at all. Our neighboring cities haven't been so lucky. Seven Hills I believe had three cars stolen the night before last and two last night as well as several broken into. We did not have any reports over the same time period. So, the residential initiative seems to be working.

We are balancing that using many of the same approaches to the Rockside corridor. I know we have had some hot spots with a couple of hotels. We are concentrating our patrols on the hours that are identified doing that, and further to supplement our manpower, we reached agreements with Doubletree and with Topgolf that during those peak activity hours they hire off duty officers; and it's a manpower multiplier because one of the things the Mayor did prior to my even being Chief here was he authorized our officers to take a department cruiser when they are working an off duty job within the City. The caveat to that is if there's an emergency, they leave the off duty location and respond to the emergency. So, basically what that does is it supplements our manpower without any cost of the City, and on the rare occasions that one of those big events hits, we have extra resources, manpower to throw on it. That occurred during the carjacking, the first officer there, Officer Waidley, was there in less than two minutes from when the call was dispatched. He was assigned to the Doubletree hotel; so he made it there almost immediately.

We are also utilizing our surveillance resources. Ryan Prosser just did a fantastic job with upgrading our surveillance camera at the Crown Centre. The new camera is completely modern, updated, newest possible technology. It has an incredible night vision and low light capability. It expands our reach to be able to look at this area and also gather evidence and pinpoint responses. It helps our dispatchers and responding officers because they can view the video in their cruisers. It helps coordinate responses to these issues.

Mayor Kurtz asked Mr. Chairman may I interject at this point?

Chairman Narduzzi said yes Mayor.

Mayor Kurtz asked would it be possible since the Chief is talking about technology, he's done a lot of research on that; and he has a suggestion that could further complement our use of cameras. Chief, is it the appropriate time to talk about that since we are talking about technology?

Chief Kilbane said if Mr. Narduzzi would like to take that right now, absolutely I could talk about it.

Chairman Narduzzi said yep, let's skip down to Number 4 then.

Chief Kilbane said we have the automated license plate reader camera already that we obtained through a County grant that is at 21 and Rockside, and we have had tremendous success with that. We have solved burglaries. We have solved car thefts with it. We managed to track suspects very successfully. We have located stolen vehicles. I was looking to expand that network to cover the entire Rockside corridor.

The vision I have would be to blanket the area with those ALPR cameras and make it impossible for anybody to get into or out of that area between 21 and the far side of I-77, West Creek area without being captured on camera. That's where the majority of our activity is happening down there. I looked at several different systems that are out there. The main thing is any system we look at has to be compatible with our existing system, and also integrate with the County network because we are able to track these vehicles anywhere they go in the County where these cameras are. I believe right now they have 50 of the cameras set up at various municipalities around here. I met with a representative from a company out of Atlanta called Flock Public Safety. They are the industry leader in these ALPR cameras, and he came out and gave us a demonstration of the camera system. Mentor, Eastlake, Pepper Pike and Hunting Valley have all within the past month or so signed contracts with Flock Public Safety. What they do is they install these cameras at the intersections. You lease them. With the ones we have now, if I wanted to add cameras using the system we have through the grant, we would have to purchase them; and they are pretty cost prohibitive. To do this area, the purchase price alone would be in the area of \$250,000 to \$300,000; and on top of that, you are going to have to have electric work and engineering done. What Flock does is they do all the installation. The only thing the City would be responsible for is making the electrical connection at the source. They will run all the wiring. We just need to run a source, and I can consult with our Service Department and Tech Service to do that. They will install them on City owned light poles or City owned light fixtures.

Mayor Kurtz said Chief if I might interject. When I was talking with the gentleman, didn't they also say as they upgrade technology and cameras, they replace them at their cost?

Chief Kilbane said absolutely. That's part of the lease. Thank you Mayor. Part of the lease is when they come out with the newest software or a newer hardware, better camera, better resolution camera, they come out and swap it out. It doesn't cost anything as long we are under the lease. These cameras are smart cameras. They use the same sort of technology as facial recognition. So, even if you don't have a license plate, you can query in there hey I want to see every brown Buick Century that went through this intersection in the past 18 hours; and it will search and find that for you. We own the data, and they have permission from the County data warehouse now to integrate this with, the existing County ALPR system. So, anything that we search for, not just the Rockside corridor, it will query everything in Cuyahoga County; and they are also looking at expanding these networks into other parts of the State; so that will expand our region in tracking suspects.

Mayor Kurtz said and Chief what was the percentage of reduction in crime based on these that they shared with us? Do you recall?

Chief Kilbane said hang on one second, I will pull that up in the literature here. I don't want to give you the wrong figures off the top of my head here. I think the biggest reductions that they saw was in Houston, and it was they saw between a 35% and 55% reduction in theft offenses and violent crime was down around 47%. That was after the introduction of the cameras.

They also saw a marked increase in arrests and recovery of stolen vehicles because of the intelligence gathered from these things. It's a force multiplier. It is like having a cop on the street corner 24/7 because they are gathering and recording all that data. It could also be accessed in real time and look at it as it's going on.

Mayor Kurtz said so the stolen car, somebody with a felony comes into our City, within 15 seconds I believe they said that information is sent to us.

Chief Kilbane said yes, they are connected to the National Crime Information Center, the NCIC; and that's where every warrant, every stolen car, every wanted person is entered into NCIC. You can on your computer in your cruiser open up the software, and you can set the alerts. So, if I want to sit down on Rockside and set my computer to alert me anytime a stolen car or wanted person or somebody under suspension comes through that camera, it will trigger me an alert. It will give me a picture of the car. It will say hey it's a black Ford. You pull over the black Ford and see if we are recovering a stolen car. We have been using this system on our camera on Rockside with the alerts, and several of our guys have had some great hits with it. This would expand it, and the big thing with this is getting those vehicles that are coming and going from the hotels that are identified as trouble spots.

What we are looking at, we did a study down there to completely blanket our Rockside corridor and make sure there are no holes in their coverage or avenues to come in and go out, getting caught. The only thing off of Rockside where I would like to put cameras is where Rockside Woods, the new part of Rockside Woods is going to come out on 21. That would cover the back door there for people who are coming up that way to get to Rockside.

For the 23 total cameras it would take to cover all those intersections, the annual lease cost would be \$57,500. There is a one-time installation fee of \$250 a camera; but they are waiving that fee for orders that are placed in that area as an introduction to get their foot in the door.

Mayor Kurtz said that's similar to what several communities on the east side just approved. What we would like to do for next week is ask Council if they would entertain us putting this on the agenda for next week; and so we can get this tool on board immediately.

Councilperson Walchanowicz asked how quickly is the turnaround on that Chief?

Chief Kilbane said right now, he's saying, they are talking about anywhere between three to six weeks to get the system installed. I have a call into Chief Cannon in Hunting Valley. His

Council just approved it last week. So, I want real time from him as to how close they are to those estimates; and he's going to keep me apprised of that.

Also, Mr. Lombardo the Regional rep said he's more than willing to come to Council to give you a presentation. He has an entire Power Point and live video presentation that shows all the capabilities of the system.

Councilperson Kapusta asked and this lease Chief goes on an annual basis or is it a commitment of a certain number of years?

Chief Kilbane said it would be a two year commitment at that annual cost for two years, and we are locked into that price, everything is covered. At the end of two years then obviously you would negotiate a new lease; but I believe Texas is where they have been doing business the most, Texas and Georgia. He said they haven't had any annual increases in four years.

Chairman Narduzzi asked so is there any additional cost for the computers that are in the cars or any kind of programs we have to buy or anything?

Chief Kilbane said that's one of the attractive things about this is it's a web based system. It's just like the camera that Ryan just put on the Crowne Centre. There's a website that the guys log into, and it's right there. There is no software purchase or anything. It's all completely web based, and part of the contract is the data storage. They store our data in their cloud, and we authorize them to move it from their cloud to the County computer. So, we don't have to have any servers or storage on site, and hopefully we will minimize or eliminate any potential IT issues because Ryan has a pretty full plate already.

Councilperson Walchanowicz asked Chief did you ask, if we have a camera that goes down or something, what is their turnaround to get out to fix it or replace it?

Chief Kilbane said if it's a software issue they can do it remote. It's a 30 minute response time. If it's an actual camera that needs replacement or a hardware or equipment issue, it's a 24 to 48 hour. They have a local contractor who is under contract who does their local repairs. It's very similar to calling Signal Service for a traffic light; they come out right away.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said and also these cameras, you know a lot of these cars you know they have dark covers over their license plates, they figure if I have these covers they can't scan me for speed or this; can those cameras penetrate?

Chief Kilbane said they do have high resolution to penetrate, but basically if you can't see it with the naked eye, you are not going to be able to pick it up with the camera. It can read and identify the make, model and year of the car. So, even if you don't get a plate, you can narrow it down; and to be honest with you, that's we caught a few years back right after we got the camera at 21 and Rockside we had a burglary on Lafayette. One of the neighbors our detectives talked to described a suspicious truck. They were able to give us a make and model and describe a ladder rack on it. Just from that description we queried the system, it gave us a bunch of possibles, and

we were able to nab one that was also popped on a camera in Lakewood almost immediately after a burglary there. We had enough to identify and arrest a suspect in a couple of days.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked Chief what's the name of this company again that provides these cameras?

Chief Kilbane said it's called Flock Public Safety, they are out of Atlanta.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked Flock?

Chief Kilbane said Flock.

Vice Mayor Grendel said okay, thank you.

Councilperson Kapusta said Chief you seem very excited about it, and your excitement leads me to believe that you certainly feel this is a good tool for our City to have, and based on that I would definitely support having the legislation brought to us next week.

Chief Kilbane said I appreciate that. Cameras are one of the most effective tools. Again, there's no perfect silver bullet that is going to solve all crimes, but we have had such great success with the one intersection we were able to get cameraed. I think especially with the rise of activity on Rockside if we couple this with an increased Police presence down there, we are going to make a very serious dent, if nothing else I want to send a message no here, go somewhere else and do your nonsense.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said also I think going this route is smart. It is going to show the residents that we are putting forth, you and the Mayor are putting forth every effort possible to keep our City safe because 90% of that stuff is coming in on Rockside. So, I think it's a great idea, and I support that 110%.

Chief Kilbane said thank you.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked Chief what was the result of that incident there at the Winking Lizard? Have they got the car back? Have they apprehended any kind of suspect?

Chief Kilbane said we recovered the car within a half an hour. We were able to track it with On Star. It was a GM vehicle, and On Star has a law enforcement liaison that we can contact who deals strictly with these sort of things once we were able to verify that we were a legitimate Police Department, and they did their due diligence. Not only were they able to locate the car, but they have the capability of shutting the car down. Now they don't do it while the car is moving because that would create a safety hazard; but the next time that car stops, they shut down the ignition and lock it out so it can't be restarted. We recovered the car down in the East 115th and Harvard area. Our detectives were able to process it. They pulled one good palm print and some fingerprints, and we believe we have some good touch DNA. We are currently waiting on a return from the State BCI Crime Lab for any results.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good, and then is it possible, I don't know if Dale is still here; but we had asked for, you used to provide us weekly figures when we got our Mayor's report. Would it be possible to have like a comparison over the last few years to see if there is a trend. I know we know it's been going up, but I would like to see actual numbers for us to be able to see that trend and everything.

Mayor Kurtz said the thought was Vice Mayor that the Chief would put the numbers together with also a brief narrative so that you can discern or differentiate with some of those numbers. So, he intends to do that with a short narrative so that you can see that, just like the Fire Department, etc.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good because with social media the numbers could maybe just be a little bit higher; but because of these high profile events, it seems like there's a wave that everybody is unsafe in their homes and everything. You like to have actual figures that we will be able to discuss and examine the situation even better.

Chairman Narduzzi said and we don't want to mislead the public either Dave too. Any kind of figure that we can have that's black and white and not gray would be a benefit for us. I was with a group of people Saturday night for Halloween, and they said the incidents on Rockside were just totally unacceptable. They have children that used to go to different places to eat after a football game or basketball game; and they won't even let their kids on Rockside Road after dark now. So, I think because of social media these things get out of hand, and if we had hard figures that would show the public that listen it's happening everywhere, Independence is no better off than anybody else; but here's what we are doing to confront the situation and hopefully bring some of these things to ease people's fears. People are very upset in Independence over two or three incidents that maybe shouldn't have happened, but I don't know, they have happened and now we have to deal with it. I think we need to step up whatever we are going to do down there.

Mayor Kurtz said Mr. Chairman that leads into the next, I thank Council and we will prepare legislation for this if that's what the members of Council would like us to do. Is that what I heard?

Several people said yes.

Finance Director Blaze asked can you take one question? Go ahead Councilperson Synek.

Councilperson Synek said I apologize for my late arrival here. A couple things go through my head, but first, this is not a minor thing; and I always believe two readings of this stuff is better than just rushing it through in one Council meeting. So, this problem didn't arise overnight. It's not going to get solved overnight, and slow and right is better than fast and wrong in my book. I would just advise slow and steady, put it on two readings, give people, and maybe there are other contractors out there that have an interest in this. We are just jumping very quickly to a solution here that, slow and right, just take a deep breath and maybe it's better to just let it work its way through the process.

Chief, maybe you addressed this before I got on, and I apologize if you did; but some of the stuff is kind of Big Brother is watching sort of thing to me. I am not Constitutional scholar or lawyer, but is this not getting on to the fringes of improper search and seizure, Constitutional invasion. There's people doing this so I imagine that people built a business around it, somebody has sort of vetted that out; but I don't know. So, can you speak to the constitutionality of some of this stuff?

Chief Kilbane said absolutely Mr. Synek, and that's a very common concern that a lot of people have. You have to remember, these cameras are scanning vehicles and license plates that are being publicly operated on a public roadway. The Supreme Court has come down very solidly and said that there's no expectation of privacy there. We are gathering information that's already out in the public, it's already out in the open. So, it's not an unreasonable search. There is no Fourth Amendment concern. I know originally the company that did our first camera that we have on Rockside and 21, and Flock Public Safety have done extensive legal research, and there's no record of any of them of any city or any municipality ever facing any action because of these cameras; and again it's out there that the license plates and vehicles, as long as they operated where you don't have a reasonable expectation of privacy such as an open roadway, there's no Fourth Amendment concern.

Councilperson Synek said very good, thank you.

Mayor Kurtz said Mr. Chairman and Councilperson Synek a couple of things. First of all, before you got on, the Chief did suggest that he looked at several different potential operating companies so to speak since we are leasing this equipment; and second of all, actually the residents think we are going too slow in many respects in responding to some of these. So, I understand that there is a fine line, but I think if you consider that, I would appreciate it. I think the City would appreciate it in this case because in some cases they think we are going too slow.

Chief Kilbane said Mr. Synek to echo the Mayor's sentiments. One of the responsibilities he holds me to, and I hold myself to is to be a responsible steward of the City's funds. Part of that is to make sure I do my homework before I come to the Mayor or I come to Council with some of these proposals. A lot of that is too you know much of the work has already been done. These cameras have been up functioning. It has been effective in other municipalities, some far larger than ours. Atlanta has had the most success with them. They started in their most crime ridden precinct; and they did a beta test for the company using it and immediately implemented them citywide. So, again I wouldn't bring something to the Mayor, and I certainly wouldn't ask him to advocate something to Council if I didn't believe it was in the best interest of the City, and it was the most cost effective way to get the job done that we need to get done.

Councilperson Veverka said question. I know I have gone into some communities, and when you go into the community they have signage that says that you are being monitored by cameras. Has it been proven that's a positive deterrent to have some signage as you come into Brecksville Road, Rockside any of those areas?

Chairman Narduzzi said so I don't know the legal aspect of it, but I can tell you this much, we just had a security system put into our home. With that security system I had cameras put on the outside of the house. They gave me stickers that I have to post outside my home to say that they are being filmed in order for me to use that in a court of law. If that's true or not, I don't know; but that's what they told me; so getting back to the Chief I would ask him are we going to have some kind of notification somewhere saying that you are being monitored via cameras?

Chief Kilbane said the only legal requirement that I am aware of for notification is if you are using cameras for traffic enforcement, either for speed enforcement or for red light enforcement. You are required to post signs saying traffic laws enforced by video or by photo. Other than that, just to have the LPR cameras, there is no posting requirement.

Mayor Kurtz said and along with that Chief, once we post those signs, I have seen them; they think you are running radar. You are taking pictures for traffic enforcement in terms of monitoring speeds, etc. I don't want to send that message.

Chief Kilbane said me neither. I have never been an advocate of the automated photo enforcement, and I really don't believe it enhances public safety; and I echo the Mayor's concerns. I would not want to inadvertently give that impression to the public.

Mayor Kurtz said unless Council wants us to put up speed cameras.

Chairman Narduzzi said yeah, go ahead Mayor, do that.

Councilperson Kapusta said the Mayor Kurtz cameras.

Vice Mayor Grendel said no thank you.

Several people began speaking at once.

Councilperson Trakas said just to expound upon that. So, a few quick things; I think it's prudent if we can see all the bids that you solicited Chief just so we could see what the difference in philosophy was and why you chose this system. I think that's important from a cost perspective; and again I think from a competitive bidding perspective, we need to see that. That's important to find out that there were bids and what they were.

Secondly, I think it's important to have signs. I think what Tom said, not just from a legal liability perspective; but you want to discourage people. You want to be known as the place where if you are trying to commit a crime, we are going to catch you up front. We are going to get you quickly. I think we want to be known as that. We are not trying to get traffic scofflaws; we are trying to prevent people from breaking and entering. We are trying to prevent people from stealing cars. We are trying to prevent property and damage to individuals. I think getting that word out is actually really important. So, the more publicity we can get that we are doing this, the better off we are. I think that really sends a good message. Chief, I think you have been sending cars through the neighborhoods a little bit more of late, and that's noticeable. People

talk about it. They feel safer. I think it's the same thing here. If we are going to expend this kind of money to keep public safety and to give more tools to you; I think it's important that we tell the world about it because that's the first thing criminals want to do is find out where there is the least enforcement, right? So, if they can be cameraed from the second they enter town, and we are following them around, particularly if they are in a stolen vehicle, we want to tell people about that. What is your reaction to that?

Chief Kilbane said I think it's a fine line. Again, a lot of people, all they will see is the word camera, and they are automatically going to jump to the conclusion that we are Lindale. We are going to be sending out tickets in the mail, and that's not the impression that I want to give to the public. I think when we enforce this and what happens. A great example of this is prostitution details when we run them at the hotels. We just ran one a couple of weeks ago, along with the Sheriff's Department and the Ohio Department of Public Safety. The Sheriff's Department intel folks shared with us. They have a website where they monitor traffic, these people who solicit prostitutes; and one of the recurring themes we saw there, which I absolutely love to see, was these people who were out looking for prostitutes or sharing information, one of the recurring themes was don't go to Independence, you will get arrested. That's the message that I want to send out there. I think we get there by high visibility enforcement. I want to be if one of these knuckleheads gets off of I-77 with ill intent; I want him to see two or three cruisers and figure it's too hot and maybe go somewhere else.

Mayor Kurtz said and maybe it will be more effective (inaudible).

Councilperson Trakas said we could do both though, don't you do both?

Mayor Kurtz said I think we start with the one and then see how we integrate the other. I will leave it to the Chief to determine that.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I have heard it for years. Twenty years ago people were afraid to drive through Independence. They feared us, they feared Mayor Kurtz. They didn't want to drive through town. We heard it. We were safe and strong and everything. I think we are going to be in the route of going back to that way. Nothing against the Mayor, you protecting us the way we all need to be protected.

Secondly, with some of those businesses on Rockside; we have been there. We know how dark the parking lots is over there next to Slyman's, that side parking lot. It's really dark. Is there anything that we can do with these property owners or business owners to enforce them to better light their parking lots to deter stuff like this from happening? If there were big bright lights behind the Winking Lizard, maybe this kind of stuff isn't going to happen. Is there any kind of avenue that we can take to try to enforce that and let them handle some responsibility for safety of their patrons?

Mayor Kurtz said I think that's important. We can look at that. We should review that and see if there's an opportunity to have them support us in our effort. We will look at that. That's interesting.

Councilperson Kapusta said in conjunction with that, and I know we can't tell people what to do on their private property; but I really think sometimes we have people who still think we are living in this impenetrable bubble and so they don't think about getting security systems or getting security systems that are hooked into the station so that it just doesn't ring in around their home, and their neighbor goes oh somebody's car alarm is going off again and lets it go. I just think that at some point in time it might behoove us Chief if coming from you there could be some communication to our residents just kind of reminding them in another layer of protection beyond what the City provides is what they could and should possibly be doing on their own with something like a home security system because as I talk to my friends and neighbors; we have had ours since we built our home back in 1986. To this day I could probably tell you that I have more friends and neighbors who don't have a system than do. I know we can't force them, but I just think it's good to reinforce the concept.

Chief Kilbane said I think too we made some great improvements with our information dissemination. When we had that last rash of car burglaries, I mean that same day the Mayor had a Swiftreach out there. We collaborated and got a message together, and we informed the public this is what you do to avoid being a victim of these. I heard a lot of feedback. That communication resonated with a lot of our residents, and not only that, it started spreading from a hey did you hear the Swiftreach, no what did he say? It said we shouldn't do this and that. I am going to take my purse out of my car and take the keys in with me. I think that along with our increased visibility and our hitting the neighborhoods strategically at times is what has made those crimes curtail here where other cities are still getting decimated with them.

Councilperson Kapusta said that's good, great.

Chairman Narduzzi said okay thanks Chief. I am going to keep moving on here.

Finance Director Blaze said Mr. Chairman one more, sorry.

Chairman Narduzzi said go ahead Vern.

Finance Director Blaze said Chief you mentioned Hunting Valley in this, and I guess there are a couple of other communities in northeast Ohio doing the LPR's; but to me Hunting Valley, one it's a village, and two it's a 100% residential community without a single commercial enterprise. I don't know if they have any State routes, definitely no freeways; and that community is getting 25 LPR's. Is 23 for Independence enough to adequately cover the City? I look at Hunting Valley, and they are getting 25; and we have so much more commercial business activity, so much more daytime population, freeways, major roadways and we are getting 23. I just want to know is that enough, or is this just a start and maybe there's more to come?

Chief Kilbane said I would look at it as this is just a start. I think we use this as a tool and use it to expand on the success we have had with our single intersection. We expand it there, and ideally as we move down the road, the next area would be the Pleasant Valley corridor; and then maybe we expand it on to 21. We look at it to make sure we are getting a return on our investment first. I am absolutely convinced that the Rockside corridor needs this. The activity at

the business end, that's where all of our crime fighting business is occurring right now. Again, maybe we expand in other areas, maybe not as intensely. Maybe spread them out a little bit further, but I think this is a good thing. Now Hunting Valley they are pretty much blanketing the whole village with those 25 cameras. They have SOM Center Road and Shaker Boulevard, those are the main intersection there; and they are doing that trying to catch entries to all their neighborhoods and make sure that nobody is going to be able to get in one of the developments without driving through one of these cameras and getting identified. That's the same approach we are taking with our problem area; but there's nothing that says if it works there we don't expand it on a larger scale.

Mayor Kurtz said I think in concert with, we are already talking about Rockside Woods North and Brecksville Road; and the other area we need to focus on is the Cloverleaf. We have had some trucks stolen, catalytic converters stolen; and so if we get them to come into town, we should be able to monitor them. So, that will be the next extension area that we are going to look at.

Chairman Narduzzi said alright, so I am going to move down to Number 2, and while we are talking about safety personnel and discussion. I guess I want to ask the Chief one question before we get to Number 2. Do we have a specific number of Police patrolling Rockside Road on the weekends, say Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday night? Or is it just a free-for-all, they just are cruising around the town? I have been asked that question. I don't know the answer.

Chief Kilbane said one of the duties of each patrol shift Sergeant is to make those assignments. For instance, I was in Saturday night to help with trick-or-treating, and I sat in on the Sergeant shift briefing before the night shift went out; and he will assign the officers and say okay between these hours these two units are Rockside and Quarry, these two units are Rockside and 21; but then you shift one of those units into the residential developments at a certain hour when we would see the uptick. It depends on the day of the week and time of day. We look at these calls to see what days are they occurring and what the locations are; and that's how we determine where to use that manpower. If something big occurs, we have those guys working the off-duty jobs that we pull into the fray as well. Our Sergeants are responsible for making sure they are assigning the officers where the proportional need may well be; but again that's not to say that something bad might not occur somewhere else in the City that's going to pull us away from because unfortunately there is some crime that's unpredictable. We are trying to use the intelligence we have to narrow down where we need to concentrate our resources.

Chairman Narduzzi asked so is there a definite number that are out there on the weekends for the City say from 8:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.?

Chief Kilbane said generally we are going to have four or five officers assigned to work, and then depending on how many other officers are working in the City, it's going to be anywhere between four or as many as twelve if several are working at the hotels and Topgolf and stuff.

Chairman Narduzzi asked and those four to five, they are on the road or three of them are on the road and two of them are sitting at the Police station?

Chief Kilbane everybody in the patrol division who is working, their primary job is to patrol the road; but if they arrest somebody, you have to take them back to the station and book them. If we have a prisoner in jail overnight, you have to come back and check on them every hour. So, there are things that are going to pull them off the road. If somebody comes up to the station to make a report, they will have to come back and meet that person there and sit down and take the report. If they have to process evidence or complete paperwork; those are things that would take them off the road, but their primary focus is to be out there on the road.

Chairman Narduzzi said okay, that was just a sidetrack to Number 2. I guess we will get back on schedule here. Safety and personnel, discussion of current and future staffing; I know we had talked years ago about the DROP Program that may be coming up for a number of people, and we don't really know do we?

Chief Kilbane said unfortunately under the Ohio Revised Code, pension status is confidential. The employees can voluntarily tell us, but we can't require them to tell us if they are in DROP or when they are going to retire, what their retirement date is going to be. You can also look at the hire dates and do the math and figure out when the maximum time would be and the minimum time and get a range when you can anticipate retirements. Right now we have about a third of our department that are in that retirement range. We have ten officers who are retirement eligible that have sufficient time and service and could say I'm done. One of them for sure has informed me that he intends on retiring in May, one of our patrolmen. I anticipate two to three others will go within the next 12 months. We are anticipating those needs. I have been working with the Mayor, we are vetting candidates now to make conditional offers to and to try to bolster the manpower; but we are not just going to hire anybody to get a warm body in. They have to be a good fit for the organization. They have to possess the right mindset and necessary skillset. They have to be the type of Police Officer that our residents deserve, not just somebody who is going to be a warm body to fill a slot.

Councilperson Veverka said Tom I have a question.

Chairman Narduzzi said yes Dale, go ahead.

Councilperson Veverka said Chief in a conversation with you before I indicated that a couple of different times we ended up with multiple officers going down Brecksville Road, I assume toward Rockside at the same time; and we talked about the possibility of it being a shift change at that particular time there would be a number of officers at the same place. I know the Service Department tweaked the hours of the shifts. Is there any thought to overlapping the shifts in some way that you would have continuous coverage?

Chief Kilbane said we do. We have either one or two officers who come in an hour early and leaves an hour early so during that hour shift change there is a presence on the road; but again, if

it's just one officer who is there covering that shift change, and they are tied up, you have to pull other officers from shift to respond to calls that come in around that time.

Councilperson Veverka said thank you Chief.

Chairman Narduzzi said thanks Dale. We will move on to Number 3, Facilities Research and Development – upgrades to a 40 year old existing facility; and the number one question, discussion of a safety force for Rockside Road. So, I know the Mayor had campaigned on the safety force on Rockside Road, and I hear it from a group of people out there in Independence asking when that's coming. I think seeing something on Rockside Road more than just cameras is a good deterrent. I would like to see more cars on Rockside Road. So, Mayor if you could give us an update on that safety force facility on Rockside Road.

Mayor Kurtz said there are two components of that. There is the existing almost 40 year old facility that the Police Department works out of today; and then there's the discussion of a remote facility in the Rockside Road area. I show you this compiled information that the Chief put together relative to the existing manpower. We asked them to put their thoughts and ideas because they are the people who have to work in this area. They have to work in the existing facility. We are going to further refine that. We are going back with a second request with our personnel, our Police Department personnel, to further refine their input. They had some really good ideas that they proposed, but it's a two-pronged approach. There is the existing facility, and what steps we have to take to, and it's consistent with our GPD study. What steps we are going to take to internally make the facility more effective, more user-friendly for all the personnel within the department; and also we are going to explore. We will come to Council after we do some RFP defining where to locate, what the needs are, how we are going to incorporate that into a more strategic initiative with respect to safety and future safety.

So, what I wanted to do today was just bring Council up to speed in terms of our goals. So, we are using the two-pronged approach; one is our existing facility and what we have to do to modernize, upgrade. Brecksville built a new facility for example. What steps we need to take to give our department personnel the best in technology, the best in terms of utilization of a facility.

The second prong is the remote facility on Rockside Road and the Rockside Road area and bringing somebody on board to determine the potential locations, the size of a facility, incorporating the expectations of the department personnel and then be able to present something to Council comprehensively so that you could then pick and choose what you want to do long term.

Chairman Narduzzi asked and is this underway this process?

Mayor Kurtz said I guess to show you the first wave of information we received internally. My thought was I want every stakeholder in the department to have a voice, and we are going to do the same thing with the Fire Department. We are going to ask them, they live and work in these environments so they should be able to give us boots on the ground information that would make their job better with the changing environment that we have experienced over the last 40 years.

Maybe Chief you want to elaborate on some of the changes in safety protocol, technology. A facility today maybe would be designed differently, things we could do with our existing facility that would make it better for our personnel, and we will focus on that initially.

Chief Kilbane said some of the concerns for a Police facility, and again, these weren't concerns 30 some years ago when the current facility was constructed; but technology has increased considerably. There's areas in our station that we have problems getting radio signals in and out on a high band radio signal. We were able to retrofit some fixes for that; but also some of the concerns is a secured parking area for staff instead of an opening parking area because in this day and age unfortunately there are some folks out there who are not too fond of cops and Police cars.

We would like to expand and have a dedicated training facility to conduct our in-house training. I am a big proponent of doing as much of our training as possible in our own house, training our officers to be the training and doing it there.

Expanded indoor vehicle storage capability; we do a lot of evidence processing. We are seeing a lot of vehicle related crimes where we need the indoor area to be able to process these vehicles.

We are getting a more diverse workforce. Female cops weren't as prevalent back in the 1980's as they are now. So, we would definitely need to retrofit with an expanded female locker room facility.

Many of the technology issues, the computers, the records storage, the evidence storage; they have all been modernized. There are better ways to do it. There's more effective ways to do it. There is nothing wrong with the way we did it; it was state-of-the-art when we initially designed this facility. We have done a really good job of keeping up with the changes as best we can; but there's definitely some large opportunities to upgrade the facility to be not just meet the current needs, but also for the next 40 years, looking into the future.

Chairman Narduzzi said so from what I am gathering, this is not going to happen overnight. This is going to be a long term drawn out process; and I don't know if that's what Independence residents are looking for. They are looking for some kind of action now. Rockside Road is not getting any better, and I think that we need to show some kind of force or at least so people can see that we are doing something on Rockside Road. I know the cameras are going to be a great help, but I don't know if that's a total deterrent from what I would like to see down there. If this is going to be a long drawn out process, maybe we look at renting a facility that's available on Rockside Road and throwing a station in there for a small amount of money just to have a spot there like they used to have at Parmatown Mall. They had a Police station inside the mall.

Mayor Kurtz said well a couple of things Mr. Chairman. First of all, this is a marathon, not a sprint. On the other hand, we are nailing down several potential sites. I would hate to elaborate on those today because it might take an advantage away in our negotiations and take some options away. So, we are kind of like between a rock and a hard place with our delivery of the message; but I can assure you that we are taking steps, both internally to get our personnel

involved. We are also taking steps to define the parameters for something on Rockside Road in that area that will further solidify the safety and security of not only the residents but also the people who come in and out of our community and those who travel through our community for response time, etc. I would hesitate to go more in detail at this point. If we call another meeting next month, we can shake the tree and see what additional information we can make public and show the population and our residents and our business population that we are taking steps that are going to be more comprehensive than just a bandaid.

Vice Mayor Grendel said there's not really a problem with our response time to these issues, is there Chief? You said two minutes in the incident at the Winking Lizard. I now that our Fire Chief, he mentioned that we got even have gotten better for their response time in the Fire Department. They have improved over the past few years too. Is response time a problem?

Chief Kilbane said no, response time is definitely not a problem. We are lucky to have one of the best response times in the State for law enforcement on category one, emergency violent calls. However, that's only part of the equation. I think Chairman Narduzzi hit the nail on the head, visibility is a big part of it as well. I think that's one of the prongs of our approach to it now is why we are concentrating on those areas at those times because when the bad guys are there that's why we want to have the biggest show of the flag and see as many marked cruisers in the area and saturated as possible.

Vice Mayor Grendel said so it's really a manpower issue.

Chief Kilbane said a permanent presence down there will only enhance that.

Mayor Kurtz said there is a safety component of Brecksville Road too. Our response time is good, but how dangerous is it at times going through the center of town? So, we have to balance that component. We are looking at several different options with respect to Brecksville Road and safety through the center of town; but I think the Chief said it best, visibility, response time and also I don't want to cloud the issue people think that the Police are purely out for law enforcement. They are there to serve in a variety of ways, and it's not always punitive. Safety is also helping somebody with a disabled vehicle. It's helping someone who is disabled, and so we perform a variety of tasks on a daily basis that you don't hear about because it's not criminal or crime related, but it is part of our function in terms of delivery of service.

Chairman Narduzzi said I agree 100% Mayor. The other day I was driving on I-480, and I saw I think it was Brooklyn Heights patrolman changing a tire for a woman; and I thought wow I haven't seen that in a long, long time. It's a great thing to see.

Mayor Kurtz said well with all due respect, here's a good one for you. Our female Policewoman helped change a tire on Pleasant Valley Road. Last weekend I got a call thanking, Chief I forgot to tell you about this one; but Autumn she helped a citizen change a tire. They were very much appreciative, not only the safety, but the fact that she jumped right in to help. So, we do have our people do a lot of that. It goes unnoticed, but it is very much appreciated. So, safety is comprehensive, it's not just punitive in nature, it's all about customer service too. So, suffice to

say Mr. Chairman, I think with Council's support, the heavy lifting is when we have to spend money and have to make that commitment. What we are trying to do is examine every possibility so that we can present to the Safety Committee and Council a strategy that you can embrace, knowing that it's a long term commitment and that we are trying to be as complete as possible rather than rush into something. The heavy lifting will be when we ask for the money to construct or to rehab and make sure that our safety forces are given the best opportunity to perform their jobs to the highest standards.

Councilperson Kapusta said to reflect on what Vice Mayor Grendel said about the number of Police officers and then to add to what you are saying Mayor regarding the role of our Police extends far beyond just the catching the criminal role; I think again too the two really to me still speak to increasing volume of Police officers because if we are saying that's what we believe is one of the deterrents, and we are also saying we would like to see a continuation of the roles far beyond what the normal role of the Police officer is considered, I think that says extra manpower.

Mayor Kurtz said Councilperson Kapusta, everyone is right. You are all right, and then future training. The next phase of Police protection is who is the first one on the scene of an accident? It's the Policeman. I see the Police being a conduit to the Fire paramedics in that we will be in a better position with technology and communication and training to where the first people on the scene, the Police Officers will be in a position to offer assistance and also be able to prepare the paramedics for their service. So, it's a great opportunity if we include all the different aspects of training and size and number of people, etc.

Councilperson Veverka said I think it's especially important to make our residents aware, number one, of the level of technology that we have; and obviously, possibly a meeting or two from now, increasing the level of technology and what it provides as far as ability to stop crime before it happens. Also, to make sure that residents are aware of the amount of time and amount of personnel that we have in place on Rockside Road to make that area a safe place.

I think unfortunately when people are getting their best information on Facebook about what they think is going on rather than in the Independence Post or any other source that the City has, be able to present true status of the efforts that are being made by your committee and by the Mayor and by this City to make sure that community is safe. I think that when we talk about safety, the first key issue of course is manpower; and I know that we are a couple of officers short of where we should be. Chief, is that not correct?

Chief Kilbane said we do have a couple of vacancies. We also have a couple of officers that are out on long term injury leave. I don't know exactly when they are going to come back.

Councilperson Kapusta said it, manpower issues; I don't think you will ever find a Police Chief that will say oh no I don't need any more cops. Definitely that's one of the issues that we have been working on.

Councilperson Veverka said and that to me is one of the key issues. What can we do to make sure that we have the Police Department staffed at the levels that we have approved to make sure

that we have those people in place. That's number one, and then obviously item number two would be the use of the technology that we already have in place and we would be adding to. I definitely see that as being those two key pegs at making people feel safe and secure.

Mayor Kurtz said in addition to that Councilperson Veverka, victims of crime, and the residents, they really want the City to prevent crime; and so that's really the goal, is to work towards preventing it. The Chief said earlier, we are looking at hiring more people; but like he said, he wants the highest caliber person that he can find. We are not just going to take anybody.

Chairman Narduzzi said I would like to give kudos to the Mayor again for that reverse 911 call just telling everybody about the incident. You get it out there, you get the facts to them and let them know exactly what happened because that story changes by the minute on Facebook or on any kind of social media. So, I agree with what the Mayor did. I still say that Council should be updated quicker than we do for incidents like that because I heard this from a neighbor down the street who heard it at McDonald's. I get that e-mail at 6:30 in the morning, and I know nothing about it. So, if you guys can work that out somehow so we could get information up front so we don't start to spread some false information rather than getting it right from the horse's mouth.

Mayor Kurtz said that's fair. I think that's fair.

Councilperson Trakas said I have a question for the Chief along these lines. So, it may be awhile before we are able to get our facilities worked out. What is the role of unmanned vehicles, our strategy? I know the Fire Department has them for search and rescue and trying to locate where the hot points are; but do we use unmanned vehicles for Police surveillance?

Chief Kilbane said yes we do, through Southwest Enforcement Bureau, SEB. One of the benefits of that collaboration is we have two surveillance drones that are available to us. They are located in Parma; 24/7 they are available with a trained operator. One of them has infrared forward looking capability for nighttime searches, and it uses thermal imaging to find folks hiding in the woods. That is available. We have used them before, and again, the Crowne Centre camera, especially the new one, has many of those same capabilities. The biggest thing that we use it for is traffic. If we have an accident, especially the way our intersection is with the two major interstates, traffic is a big concern. Being able to get eyes on the big picture of traffic and establish detours right away helps alleviate a lot of those problems. We have the fixed camera now that we use to that great effect for that, and we also have the drone that's available that we used on numerous occasions.

Councilperson Trakas said the reason I asked is I thought maybe to Councilperson Walchanowicz's point about dark parking lots and that type of thing if we did kind of randomly use the unmanned vehicle in those types of areas where it was visible and people saw that it said Police; I think the word would get out pretty quickly to be proactive and not try to rip off cars. I guess that it was kind of one of the thoughts I had. I don't know if that's a strategy that you would want to consider employing, but again I think word of mouth is everything. It's like we talked about earlier, you don't want to come here and commit a crime. I think that's still the case, we just have a lot of new businesses and a lot of new criminals. They say well you have to

go where the opportunity is, and so everything we can do to push that away to visibly push that way. It's like having Police on a corner, unmanned vehicles that we know are Police going all through the business district. I think that's the type of things to supplement the cameras that you are referring to, and our head count and our building; I think that would really go a long way to diminish crime.

Mayor Kurtz said I agree with Councilperson Trakas and members of Council in that, two things, the Chief needs to relay information as soon as possible when there is a situation that takes place; and we will do that in the future.

Second of all, that we are going to have our people looking at some of these parking lots; and I think the restaurants and some of these business owners need to be made aware that they have a responsibility to illuminate and make safe their parking lots. So, I think the City should bring it to their attention, and then they should respond accordingly. So, those are some of the steps we are going to take.

Chairman Narduzzi said thank you Mayor. I don't want to start cutting people short, but I don't want to run into Dave's meeting either, it is Election night.

Mayor Kurtz said there's no meeting after this one.

Vice Mayor Grendel said no meeting Tom, so it's yours.

Chairman Narduzzi said we have all night then.

Mayor Kurtz said no.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I have one more comment, is that alright?

Chairman Narduzzi said I have few. Go ahead sir.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I think what a lot of people have to take into consideration is that the City has spent millions of dollars on the downtown; and we want to turn that into a walkabout downtown where people can walk to the downtown and walk to the stores. To me, and to the people I have talked to, the biggest concern is the Fire Department and the Police Department flying through downtown heading to Rockside. If we have hundreds of people walking the downtown, the last thing I want to see is a patrol car doing 60 or 70 to get to Rockside. So, I think that's going to be one of the bigger pictures of why we want to have that satellite station down there, just to keep that new developed downtown safe from any type of tragedy from that. Does that make sense?

Chairman Narduzzi said I agree with you Chris because I live on the south side, closer to Rockside. I don't know, if there's more calls going to the south, then we have a lot of calls because on an average six, seven times a day, that ambulance, Fire truck and Police cars are flying by Lafayette Blvd. It's all hours of the day, and all hours of the night. I would love to see

something closer to Rockside Road or on Rockside Road to eliminate that future problem because sooner or later it's going to happen.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I know the Mayor, he tried with that emergency ramp by the Service Department, and ODOT wants nothing to do with it. What other options do we have?

Mayor Kurtz said Councilperson Walchanowicz and Mr. Chairman, I haven't given up on that. We were rejected for about the fourth or fifth time, but I am still going to pursue it. That is the strategy. I truly believe it's in our best interest. So, again we are trying to do a variety of things to make it safe as our emergency vehicles travel through town, on the interstate, wherever they are traveling. Again, we are trying to find a variety of solutions to tie them altogether.

Councilperson Veverka said Chief can you please tell us aren't there some rules as far as the appropriate speed for a cruiser through town? I know that I spend a lot of time at the corner of Stone Road, and it's quick; but it doesn't seem excessive. I heard somebody say 60 or 70 miles per hour, what parameters do we have for the officers as they go through that center of town?

Chief Kilbane said the Ohio Revised Code says emergency vehicles that are in response, they are exempt from speed limits and from traffic control devices provided that the operator exercises what's called due regard for safety. So, there is no set speed limit, no number; but they have to operate the vehicle safely. They can't fly down there at 90 miles an hour. That wouldn't be safe, but they could exceed the speed limit as long as they are taking care to watch out for cross traffic and approaching intersections carefully and all the things that we train our officers to do.

Training is a bigger part of that I think than the actual limitations. All of our officers have been through the emergency vehicle operation course that a company called Drive Team puts on; and all of our supervisors have been through the Drive Team supervision course. It teaches them not only the laws, but it also teaches them about vehicle dynamics; and there is a driving component where they go out with a driving instructor who teaches them how the Police vehicles react differently at different speeds.

Vice Mayor Grendel said I was going to ask a question. In Brecksville they have a new Police station and everything. Was their old Police station in City Hall?

Chief Kilbane said yes.

Mayor Kurtz said similar to us.

Vice Mayor Grendel said when we do this study Mayor, I would like to see it all encompassing. If we are going to invest a lot of money in technology to get our main station, I would like to see if there's options. As far as City Hall goes, we could probably use more room for City Hall and maybe have a Police station more centrally located and do what Brecksville did. So, I think before we invest the money, let's do an all encompassing to see if there's a better way instead of having two or three different buildings where we house the Police, I would rather concentrate on having the best equipment and having the most manpower. I would suggest, we don't have to

reinvent the wheel, Brecksville is highly successful with what they did, and let's take a look and see if we should do something similar to what they did. Of course, it's a little different; they don't have a Rockside Road, but they are going to have an area down eventually at Miller and Brecksville Road that down the road is going to be very important.

Mayor Kurtz said they may end up doing something in that area for their safety forces because of the length of time it will take to get there from their existing station. I think in that case they may be five or ten years behind because it has to develop; but once it develops, it's going to take on a life of its own just like Rockside took on a life of its own.

Vice Mayor Grendel said because we have a finite amount of money, we should invest it wisely and make sure that Rockside Road, it's more mature and developed; but we don't know what's going to be the effect of the pandemic. Hopefully, it will still be vibrant and have a lot of office space. I would like encompass maybe also when we do invest this money, we invest it in the best possible way for our Police Department, the safety of our residents and the safety of our visitors here on Rockside.

Mayor Kurtz said we are looking at a long term strategy; so that should fulfill your concerns. I appreciate that. Again, that's consistent with benefitting economic development and making sure that we prepare ourselves for downturns, for changes in our business model. We are working hard at trying to reinvent ourselves there too because you can't stay the same. Things are changing all the time, and this year is clearly an indicator of that. So, we are moving through a lot of different dynamics, trying to come up with the best option today, but with a long term poke at things.

Vice Mayor Grendel said in the short term I think it's a manpower issue like Kathleen mentioned too I think.

Mayor Kurtz said like the Chief said, it's not just hiring a body. There's training, there's all the different culture orientation. There's equipment and supporting equipment; but we are moving in that direction, but we are doing it methodically. Like the Chief said, we want to hire the best people possible, not just anybody.

Vice Mayor Grendel said thank you.

Mayor Kurtz said consistent with that, this hiring new people will probably take a two or three layer approach. So, we will hire some people now in the near future. We will look at some of the retirees coming up; so we have some overlap. We don't diminish our number, but we are able to plan based on some unknowns as the Chief indicated with respect to the DROP program. We don't really know, but we have ideas. We almost have to plan and prepare in anticipation of some of these changes that are going to take place in the next year or so.

Chairman Narduzzi said thanks Dave. We are going to keep moving on here, so let's go to Number 6, Discussion of Roles and Partnership with the Federal, State, County Governments and Mutual Aid.

Chief Kilbane said we currently have mutual aid agreements with all surrounding agencies. We have a blanket mutual aid agreement with all the SEB agencies. We just completed one last year with the National Park Service. The biggest asset for the coordination of mutual aid agencies has been centralized dispatch with all the surrounding communities being dispatched from the same location. It really integrates it well. Also, all the cruisers are equipped with GPS, so dispatch can see which cruisers are closer. One of the incidents the other night when Seven Hills was dealing with an in progress auto theft; dispatch was able to look at it and determine that there were actually two Independence cruisers that were closer than the backup Seven Hills unit. We were able to get the mutual aid request and shot through. Officer Sedlock was one of the first ones to respond to that, and he actually ended up pursuing the suspect vehicle out of the City. So, you know that's what we are doing to coordinate our efforts.

It's a layered effort with intelligence resources. We are using the County (inaudible) Center, and we are also dealing with the crowd control group that's run out of the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's office. This is an investigation tool where we share resources, and they disseminate information and request information. Our detectives have used this to identify suspects, to put complicated cases together, multi-jurisdictional cases. There was the same person who committed a robbery both at our Shell station and at the Sunoco station on Rockside. He also committed 17 other robberies in Cuyahoga County in about at least eight or nine different cities. He hit Cleveland, he hit Parma, he hit Strongsville, he hit Rocky River. Through this group we were able to share resources and put the pieces of each of our investigations together, identify the suspect; and they just indicted him. He is currently in custody at the County jail, but they indicted him on about two dozen counts of armed robbery with firearm specifications. So, these are the sort of things that we are putting together, and we are using each other's resources. It's especially valuable when these idiots decide to hit one of our cities; a neighbor sees them, somebody driving by sees them, they put the call out. It's not just the two or three officers who are on duty in Brooklyn Heights or Valley View or wherever it occurs; all of a sudden, you have triple or quadruple that manpower that's coming in from other cities to set up perimeters and help chase suspects down.

We just assisted Broadview Heights. They had a traffic stop. These two kids threw guns out the windows and took off, bailed out of the car in the Wallings Road area off of I-77. They ran into the woods on foot. We were able to send some officers up there to set up a perimeter, and Officer Vitron and his canine were able to go up there and help locate the suspects. That's how the mutual aid is working. Our Federal partners, we are still working very closely with HIDTA, with the Human Trafficking Task Force, the Marshal's Northern Ohio Fugitive Task Force has assisted us on several occasions with some wanted suspects.

Mayor Kurtz said you want to also share that we through our SWAT team, we shared our resources with other different layers of Government.

Chief Kilbane said oh absolutely. Through SEB we have a SWAT team and a crowd control unit; and our officers, we have officers assigned to both of those units. They responded to the riots in Cleveland. Our SWAT team has done numerous barricaded suspects in other cities. They have done high risk armed drug raids in other cities. This is our contribution to other cities,

but those are like an insurance policy. None of us want to file a claim with our auto insurance policy, but boy if somebody hits you and they don't have insurance, you are darn glad you have it. If one of those horrible events were to happen here, we would have those resources immediately available to us.

Chairman Narduzzi said if I could just touch on one more thing Chief, the dispatch center. How has that been working for us not being located in town because I have heard firsthand some things that probably shouldn't have happened or they didn't handle it the right way; and I just wondered if we are tracking response times through the new dispatch center and how that is working on a big overall basis?

Chief Kilbane said yes. You have to look at it on an overall basis because you know when our dispatch was in house, they made mistakes, there were some delays; but those were abulations as opposed to; if you look at the overall, our response times have either stayed the same or improved, depending on the category with large scale incidents that have actually improved our response times. The actual operation of the dispatch, it's absolutely no different than when it was in our own building. You are talking many times to the same dispatchers, they are just sitting in a seat somewhere else. The technology is upgraded. We didn't have the GPS mapping there. We didn't have some of the predictive software, and the manpower and staffing. When Broadview Heights had that incident with the armed people the other day, if that would have happened here under our old system, we would have had only two dispatchers working, and that's for Police, Fire and EMS. There they have six to eight dispatchers working; so they were able to assign one dispatcher just to handle that call and another dispatcher to handle all the other calls and then another dispatcher to handle the Fire and EMS calls. They have that flexibility because all ten cities in the dispatch center aren't going to be busy at the same time. So, if there are a cluster of calls going out in Independence, they could shift their staffing to handle those calls. If it's quiet in Brooklyn Heights or it's quiet in Valley View, they don't need as much dispatch resources for that.

Not only was it a necessary or required change because the State is limiting the number of public safety answering points or 911's, and we were the second lowest call volume 911 center in Cuyahoga County. They made it very clear to us that we were on the chopping block, and they weren't going to support our 911 services anymore.

Fire Chief Steve Rega said I would just like to comment on that too. On the fire side, the dispatch center has been outstanding. When you talk about trying to coordinate responses from upwards of eight different departments; Independence is right in the middle of that whole group. When we have a fire here, it's one push of the button to activate multiple cities. In the past, you would have to call each dispatch center individually to get those resources going. That's a lot of calls, it was a lot of wasted time. When a call goes down now, it alerts our station individually. It goes right in and notifies the guys, and it happens immediately. So, they have done an outstanding job.

The other thing is they have done a great job on is if we have had an issue, either a technical issue with the dispatch counsels or something or the CAD system, they work tirelessly to correct

those issues and make sure it's as efficient as it can be. So, I can't say enough for Nick DiCicco and the CVD group there and what they have done for us.

Chairman Narduzzi said yes Dale.

Councilperson Veverka said it sounds like we have a lot of good things going on as far as response time and otherwise; but I know that one of the reasons besides the fact that it was going to be required somewhere down the road, but there was some talk of cost savings. Do you have any idea if there was indeed cost savings? Has there been enough of a time period to get a handle on possible cost savings?

Chief Kilbane said I don't think we have been through an entire budget cycle to be able to compare apples- to-apples. I know our budget for the dispatch was pretty significant compared to what the project cost was for Chagrin Valley; but again until we can actually look at the figures, I can't tell you what that difference is.

Councilperson Veverka said that would be good to get those somewhere down the line when it is appropriate.

Chief Rega said those costs are shared across all communities so I think this last time around it was a less of an increase due to Covid and everything like that. They were very successful, but our key here is that we are with CVD, and they are one of the big players in the County. When they talk about 911 money which is getting to the point where that money might becoming available at some point, and CVD is positioned to really get some of that money because they are such a large PCAP. So, I think it was the right move at the right time, and we positioned ourselves real well for future cost savings.

Councilperson Veverka said thank you.

Chief Rega said the other thing to about CVD, they do have a drone team that can come and help us as well. They have other assets that they are bringing on board. I think a command center and some other mobile dispatch capability. These are some things that individually we could just not possibly do, and they are making those items available to us.

Another thing that is coming on line soon is the radio maintenance and programming service which is coming on in December. Our radios are technical gadgets nowadays. They need to be constantly tuned and adjusted to make sure they are working the best. We often have to pay a lot to do that for third party vendors. CVD is offering that at a reasonable rate, and it's right in house available. That is another great asset that they will be providing to us in the near future.

Chairman Narduzzi said thanks Chief. So, I have one question for the Chief from a David Reid. What is the best way for a new resident to build a healthy relationship with our Police Department?

Chief Kilbane said give us a call. We would be more than happy to come out and talk to you. That's one of the requirements that we require from our Police officers. We want them to engage with the public. We want them to answer those questions and those concerns. So, if somebody has a question like hey what's the best way to burglar proof our house? Or what should I tell my kid about driving safely? Pre-Covid we would give tours of the station to groups of kids, to families who wanted to bring their kids up and look around. Absolutely, they can call, they can e-mail, they can stop up and see us even though it's not as practical now with all the protocols. We are happy to hear from them. We are happy to talk to any of our residents.

Councilperson Trakas said Chief one thing that some of the communities do, and I know that we have done a couple of these open houses for like the volunteers and that type of thing. Perhaps having some Chief's hours where you come in and get a cup a coffee with the Chief, going to some of the neighborhood groups to let them know. We have a lot of HOA's in town. It might make some sense just to be able to do that. I was surprised just by following your lead and suggesting that people lock their cars and not leave valuables in the cars. I had all sorts of people thinking I was some law enforcement genius; and all I did was listen to Chief Kilbane and Mayor Kurtz which I always try to do. The reality of it is, it was really beneficial; and sometimes common sense is about common virtue quite honestly. We forget some of these tips. My dad used to lock our car door in the garage which was locked. So, he was a suspicious human being.

Mayor Kurtz said he didn't want you to steal it, that's why.

Councilperson Trakas said it might have been internal theft. With my friends Mayor, you know.

It might be a good idea to get you out and get some officers out and maybe do a little of those community service nights where we might be able to have a real good honest conversation in the neighborhoods; and people might have a different approach, particularly in some of our newer sections but also in our traditional sections as well. If we put together a little bit of plan for that over the course of a couple of months and do a series of neighborhoods, I think that would be beneficial for the department and could give them some tips and dispel some of these rumors. Tom and I get some of the same e-mails and text messages and Facebook questions from some of the same suspects, but it might be able to alleviate some of the concerns; but also make you aware of things that they are noticing that they may not talk about. So, I just thought maybe that kind of a dialogue might be beneficial.

Chief Kilbane said absolutely, and I know we have done that. We have open houses, usually in the summer. Obviously, this summer we skipped it. We will have the officers go there. We will do a canine demonstration. We will have them talk to the SWAT officers. We will have a detective there and explain what they do. Last year we also participated in the coffee with a cop at Starbucks on a number of different occasions, and I went down there with some of the officers. We would sit down with some of the residents and most of the businesses; and that's the sort of community engagement that we need. If you hear of any of these HOA's that want us, we are a phone call away. If I can't do it myself, I will make sure somebody from the department is there. The residents are too important for us to ignore them on stuff like that.

Councilperson Trakas said maybe being proactive about it and scheduling, hey we are going to be in Dalebrook Estates on such and such a date; and we want to have a little get-together, a coffee klatsch at someone's home or something like that. That might be the type of thing I am thinking of.

Mayor Kurtz said you know what, when we find out what the new normal is going to be like absolutely we can do those things. Right now people are more hunkered down, and they are more reticent to hesitate to want to be part of a community event right now. We will be respectful of that; but after we get through this, absolutely, that's one of our goals. As a matter of fact, Chief while I have you, I am going to send you David Reid's number so you can call him. He wants to talk to you about a couple of things.

Chief Kilbane said absolutely Mayor.

Chairman Narduzzi said alright thanks everybody, and the last thing on the agenda is the 2021 Capital discussion. So, tell us what you need Chief. We don't have any money, but tell us what you need.

Chief Kilbane said more cops and helicopters and drones. I know we deferred the purchase of vehicles last year. I wanted to wait until Ford got a year to work the kinks out of their new model of Police interceptors; so that's the major purchase for this. We also have planned out in the future for vest replacements, weapon replacements, range refurbishment. None of that's coming up on the schedule for 2021. We have money set aside each year so when it does roll around on the schedule we will have the funds there available. I sat down with Finance, and we went over it; and there weren't a whole lot of tweaks that needed to be made in it. One of the things we will need to revisit, when we look at this facility on Rockside Road, I would like to take a good hard look at increasing staffing to dedicate staff there. I envision the possibility of maybe initiating an extra shift, a swing shift if you would, where we will target the hot spot hours out of that Rockside Road facility and use that to really concentrate our efforts, do it all hands on deck in addition to what we are doing already. I think that would really go a long way to sending that message that hey that stuff doesn't happen here. You are not going to be able to commit a crime without tripping over one of our cops.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I like that.

Chairman Narduzzi said that's the best thing I heard all night long.

Councilperson Walchanowicz asked did you make that up Chief?

Chief Kilbane said it was just off the cuff.

Chairman Narduzzi asked Chief Rega anything from on your side?

Chief Rega said I looked at it with Finance and we have identified some vehicles in the future that we put into the Five-Year Plan that we would need to replace that are approaching eight to

ten years old, some of our chase vehicles. SCBA's obviously you know how I work, I try to go after grants where I can, but I want to make sure the money's available if we need it. So, looking down the road SCBA's might be an item that we need to look at. Our current ones are only three years old, but they tend to go out of date after ten years or three cycles of changes with the NFPA. So, these are some items that I have identified. Portable radios, our current radios are three years old, but they are expensive. I would like to put a little money away for that to get a replacement in another seven to eight years. So, those are some big ticket items.

The other big item that I am looking at is we have been saving for a ladder truck. I am waiting to get our new vehicle. We currently have our 1997 Pierce being refurbished, and everything seems to be going pretty well with that. I would like to possibly look at maybe refurbishing our ladder truck. It is a very good truck. We just had it tested last Friday, and it seems to be holding up pretty well. We have a few things we need to look at but nothing major; but the value of the truck is the chassis and transmission. This particular truck is in really good shape. It might behoove us to look at some of the monies we already have saved and maybe send it in for a refurbishment and try to get another 15 to 20 years out of it now instead of paying perhaps up to \$1,500,000 for a new one in another five or six years. So, I am going to sit with Pierce when we are up there looking at our new truck and run that idea by them and see what they can do with this truck that we currently have and see how they can bring it up to current standards in terms of what electronics and LED and all those other things that they can do with it. So, again it's very much a research project at this point, but it might be a good option for us and a cost savings down the road.

Chairman Narduzzi asked and how many years is that going to be out?

Chief Rega said currently the ladder truck is a 2002; so it's about 18 years; but the truck is in really good shape. We have been taking care of it all along, and the engine and transmission has less hours than we did on the engine that we sent in. We save a little bit on maintenance in the future because the engine and transmission, they don't have the fluid and emissions issues on them like the current ones do that we are having problems with.

I will also probably be approaching Council in January or February on ordering a new squad. The build time on those is about ten or eleven months; so while we are not due for one until the 2022, I would like to probably put that order in the first of the year. That way we can save on any increases that may happen with Braun. We are not looking to redesign that vehicle, we like the models that we have right now. So, I just want to kind of get in there and get ahead of any increases and try to save some money on that as well.

Chairman Narduzzi asked and how are those paid for Chief? Is that paid for up front?

Chief Rega said they are usually paid for on delivery, but they if they get done a little bit earlier, they can hold delivery until 2020 in order to get that additional funding that would come in that year.

Chairman Narduzzi asked and that's already on the Five-Year Capital Plan?

Chief Rega said that's already identified in the Five-Year Capital Plan. Those are probably the two big items.

I do have a couple of items on the miscellaneous things at the end of the meeting.

Chairman Narduzzi said well we are approaching that so go ahead. You have the floor.

Chief Rega said in talking with HR and the Mayor about part-time wages. I was putting together an option. Currently our part-time firefighters are covered under an ordinance that's from 2011. So that ordinance doesn't get adjusted too often with the wage range for them. I am looking to move the category of firefighter into what was changed this year. It's Ordinance 2020-21, and it outlined a wage schedule for non-exempt, non-bargaining members. I would like to add them to that Level 3 in that particular ordinance; and that would allow them to be in a position where when the City decides to provide increases in that ordinance or changes, they would not be excluded by being in a different ordinance. So, for pay range purposes or wages, I would like to make that adjustment; and I sent that over to the Law Department for review. He believes that can happen.

Some other benefits that the part-timers have will not be able to be adjusted by just making that change; but at a later date we can look at that older ordinance and how we can make adjustments there. I think HR has some plans to make some adjustments in it, but she wasn't ready for that. We are approaching the max level of pay range for part-timers, and along with that, I would provide a chart showing some of the regional departments around us and what their pay rates are for part-time and the reasons for wanting to seek that change.

Chairman Narduzzi said and I'm sure that's going to be a discussion that all of Council is going to want to have with the Mayor and HR and the Finance Director.

Chief Rega said I'm sure it would be.

Mayor Kurtz said actually we are going to prepare legislation to address this issue, and Council can determine how they want to navigate through it.

Chairman Narduzzi said fair enough.

Chief Rega said and then the other item is last Safety Committee meeting I brought up the Lexipol Company that provides policies and procedures; and I think we provided some additional information on them. I talked it over with the Mayor, and this would be like a long term agreement to get into which at this point I think I would like to approach this as getting a one year agreement to move forward with them and see how it fits with us. There are different levels that we would still have to work our way up to with Lexipol, different modules if you will. So, I would like to get the first couple of modules and see how it works for us; and if it's going to work great, I would present Council with a long term agreement to continue that relationship with Lexipol instead of just right off the bat entering into a full agreement to get to all five levels

and an annual fee. I think that's kind of the way we wanted to approach it when I was talking to the Mayor.

Mayor Kurtz said we just determined that, Mr. Chairman and members of Council, we determined let's see how this works with a couple of modules, and once we are convinced it's a good strategy to keep this in sync with what's going on with today's rules, laws, etc. that we could then come back with a comprehensive package.

Chairman Narduzzi asked is that going to be in the packet for this next week?

Mayor Kurtz asked do we need legislation for that Chief?

Chief Rega said no, we will not need legislation for this first part. It's under \$15,000. They are a professional service. It's a sole source setup, but if we decide to move forward with it the following year, we would definitely put together the whole package as far as where we are going and what it will cost on an annual basis.

Mayor Kurtz said so Mr. Chairman is there anybody who objects to us doing this first phase approach to this to see how well it fits into our needs, and then we could down the road, if it's something that we need it to be more comprehensive, that we will come back to Council.

Chairman Narduzzi said I have no disagreements. I know Chief Rega went through it very detailed last Safety Committee meeting; so I understand it. If it makes our force better and nothing falls through the cracks, I am all for it.

Mayor Kurtz said okay, thank you.

If we are done, I would like to review a couple of things.

Chairman Narduzzi said I have a couple of more things Mayor.

Mayor Kurtz said go ahead.

Chairman Narduzzi said Police Chief, there is a video going around town of, I don't even know who the officer is, but was driving a cart with 8th grade students on it and hit a fire hydrant. My question is was that ever brought up to anybody? Did anything happen with that? I know my son fell on the playground today, and I got four phone calls. My son was on that cart, and we never got a call. If I would not have seen the video, I would have never known it happened. So, I am just trying to get my bearing around this. Does anybody follow up on accidents like that? Was anybody called? Was anybody notified?

Mayor Kurtz said Mr. Chairman, the Chief and I have had a conversation about that. Chief, if you want to elaborate, go ahead, but I think that we are finding a strategy that can make sure that there is good communication between the school and the City and anybody who is involved.

Chief Kilbane said it's been addressed through and being handled as a personnel matter. I don't think it's really appropriate to discuss the details of a personnel matter in an open meeting, but we have addressed it; and we are working to identify potential deficiencies and making sure they are corrected.

Chairman Narduzzi said I guess I wasn't trying to dig. My son was involved in it. I am just thinking, I would have liked to have received a phone call at least telling me what happened, and that everything was okay, nobody got hurt and so on and so forth. I was just throwing it out there just to make sure you guys were aware of it. I had no idea that anybody was aware of it.

Mayor Kurtz said we are aware of it. We are addressing it, and we will be better because of it.

Chairman Narduzzi said okay. That's all I had Mayor; so if you have some other.

Mayor Kurtz said I just want to recap a couple of things about legislation for the cameras on the next agenda. The City is going to look throughout the business community to see what properties and business owners need to do a better job of lighting the parking lots. The facilities, we have talked about the remote facility and the main station. We will continue to get more information about personnel; but we will take a long term approach and look at investing monies into a long term strategy before we just present a piecemeal approach to Council. We will also update Council, the Chief will relay information as soon as possible whenever an incident or situation occurs. We will do it on a timely basis. When I get information then we will immediately get information to Council so that there is better communication, and you are aware of what's going on.

There will be legislation on the agenda for the Fire personnel part-timers; and then we will do the Lexipol internally for the first couple of criteria. Once we determine it's good, we will approach Council for a more comprehensive approach.

I am not sure if I missed anything. The number of Policemen, we are going to continue to look at hiring and watching our budget; but we will also be making sure that we don't have large gaps when the DROP Program kicks in.

Chairman Narduzzi said and just one more thing with the visual impact of Police presence on Rockside Road until we come up with a different facility somewhere; but I think that extra visual effect would help us on Rockside Road.

Mayor Kurtz said well I can tell you driving on Rockside Woods North last Saturday night, when I got to Topgolf, and I saw a cruiser in the median perpendicular to the road; and you saw Police, it definitely gets your attention. So, we may use a strategy when we get these new vehicles, if the other ones aren't retired, we may use them as part of our strategy. So, we will keep the Safety Committee and Council abreast of what's going on, as long as we get approval for the new units.

Chairman Narduzzi said thank you.

Councilperson Kapusta said related to Chief Rega's comment about his budget. I just wanted to congratulate him on being acknowledged by the Mayor for his budget preparation process. I remember from when I was still an employee with the City, you set the bar pretty high there Chief, thank you.

Chief Rega said thank you very much. I really appreciate that.

Finance Director Blaze said nice job Chief.

Mayor Kurtz said again, nice job Chief.

Chief Rega said thank you.

Chairman Narduzzi asked any other matters?

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I think Chief Kilbane feels left out, great job with all of your work today Chief.

Chief Kilbane said that's what you pay me for.

Chairman Narduzzi said on the hot seat again. Well if there are no other matters, I will ask for a motion to adjourn.

Mayor Kurtz said thank you Mr. Chairman, thank you members of Council.

By the way, one more thing, the Finance Director did give Fire Chief Rega an award for the way he presents his information as an example for everyone else. So, I just want to throw that out there.

Moved by Walchanowicz, seconded by Kapusta, to adjourn the Safety Committee Meeting of November 3, 2020. Voice Vote: 3 yes/0 no; motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, the Safety Committee Meeting was adjourned at 5:21 p.m.